

June 28, 2007

The Honorable Pete Stark  
Chairman, Health Subcommittee, Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Stark:

On behalf of Families USA, the voice of health care consumers, I am writing to express our strong support for the Medicare Advantage Truth in Advertising Act.

Seniors enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan should have similar protections as seniors enrolled in traditional Medicare and should not be hit with far greater co-payments or fees for services than what is charged by traditional Medicare. Because Medicare Advantage plans are so complex, it is almost impossible for beneficiaries today to assess the true costs of joining a Medicare Advantage plan. A plan with a seemingly low premium or co-payment for a doctor visit may have hospital or home health charges that are substantially higher than traditional Medicare. Beneficiaries only become aware of these added costs when they become ill and are forced to pay much more than they would have under traditional Medicare.

The Medicare Advantage Truth in Advertising Act would level the playing field for seniors. Medicare Advantage plans would no longer be allowed to charge a co-payment where Medicare does not charge. It would also prevent Medicare Advantage plans from charging flat copayments that exceed the overall Medicare charge for deductibles or co-insurance. At the same time, beneficiaries could still benefit from a plan's predictable co-payments, so long as their plan's out-of-pocket costs were the same as or lower than traditional Medicare. This will both protect beneficiaries, and will encourage plans to become more efficient.

Your work on behalf of seniors is commendable and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Ron Pollack  
Executive Director